

PHILADELPHIA.

ON APRIL 25, an event of special importance took place in the city of Philadelphia. It was not only the opening of the San Francisco Conference. The Transport Workers Union graduated 28 members from a special leadership training school conducted by the local. Alberta Washington young Negro porterette was one of the graduates. There were Negro and white—men and women.

A change, indeed, from the dark days of last August, 1944. The notorious PTC with strong political ties in Philadelphia made their disgraceful attack against the TWU by launching their "white supremacy" strike. It was the special contribution of PTC to foment a hate campaign in the city—part of a plot to split Negro and white and thus clinch the state of Pennsylvania for Dewey. But the firm hand of the late President Roosevelt, buttressed by the action of TWU, the labor movement and the citizens of the city in upholding the FEPC stopped PTC in their tracks.

The union emerged stronger and won their contract four days after the provocation was put down. Pennsylvania went for Roosevelt.

A change from the days of 1894 and 1910 when the attempts of the PTC workers to organize were beaten down in one of the bloodiest pages of labor history.

A change, indeed, from the notorious Mitten Plan, the Plan which is considered the father and model for company unionism in the United States.

The Transport Workers Union after a concerted drive to organize the workers of PTC won the election on March 14, 1944. It was a bitterly contested fight. Red-baiting, Negro-baiting were the weapons used by the Company union. But the Philadelphia local of the Transport Workers Union, backed by CIO know that it was a fight that must and could be won. And they did; they count 10,000 members in the ranks of the local today.

The winning of the election did not solve all the problems of the union. Witness the events of last August. A background of company unionism had to be overcome. How to gird the union against any other provocations

Leadership School

The Worker

6-10-45

The Transport Workers Union has come a long way since the dark days of August, 1944, in Philadelphia. It is training its members for leadership in a fast growing union.



Graduates of the first TWU leadership school map out a program for the new classes now in session.

which the company might pull off had to be met. It had to be met in a number of ways—through the regular activity of the union in representing their members as bargaining agent—and through special mediums of educating and re-educating the members of the local. The first responsibility to the membership has been borne with high honors. So far the local has won three million dollars in wage increases, a \$25 Christmas bonus, and a \$79.20 uniform allowance, plus all of the other advantages which go with belonging to a union.

The second—that of a broad educational program is now in progress. The local in Philadelphia was a new one. Its leadership, J. B. Dougherty, president

and Joseph Marks, secretary-treasurer, bus drivers on the PTC, were new. They understood that the cornerstone of all their work had to be education of the membership on CIO policy.

Once the members knew what CIO was—what the Transport Workers Union was—then one of the biggest jobs would be done. From the interview we had with Mr. William Moody who came to this city Jan. 1, from a recent assignment he had with the National Maritime Union as its publicity director for the Great Lakes area, a new course has been charted which adequately copes with the situation.

The local now has a regular newspaper appearing twice a month. But more important, the

local has launched an educational program which is as far reaching and ambitious as any other in the city. By the first of July, 150 to 200 key people will have gone through special classes designed to make them better leaders in the union. The first class started with 30 people (28 of whom attended 8 out of 10 sessions). Who were these 30? Practically every car barn in the city was covered with at least one representative—a section officer or a leading steward. Some of them had seen 10-15 years service with PTC. There was Anna Mayer, 65 years old, an executive board member and a cashier for PTC. There were Negroes, Irish, German—a cross section of the workers who run

the trollies and "els" in Philadelphia.

The plan for the classes was worked out in consultation with Leo Huberman, a pioneer in the field of workers education. He is now the educational and public relations director for the National Maritime Union. Mr. Huberman and Dr. Charles Obermyer, his assistant at the NMU participated in the teaching of one session each.

What do they learn?

They start discussing problems close to the hearts of the stewards: Duties of Section Officers and Stewards—how to settle grievances—how to build the union. Then, the History of the Transport Workers Union, the CIO, the Constitution of TWU—a survey of conventions held by TWU; how to best use the contract; a special session on collective bargaining, which discusses the NLRB and the Wagner Act; union problems on the job, which deals, red-baiting; parliamentary procedure; the no-strike pledge; postwar perspectives.

The classes are conducted in such a way that every member of the class participates. There are regular tests to find out how much the students learned—and if the test reveals flaws, then special efforts are made to clear up any misconceptions. Three minute speeches are made by every student on the problems taken up. And the class is conducted so that it becomes a model on how to conduct good meetings of the union.

How did it go over?

The best test is the fact that all of the graduates are the best publicity agents for this program of education in the local. Since the termination of the first class, eight new classes have started in the local, covering every part of the city. The executive board has voted a special class for itself, conducted by Bill Moody. The other classes are taught by rank and filers of the union, who are graduates of the first school.

Yes, the TWU has come a long way in Philadelphia. It has met the big test. It sets the pace for any union in the educational field in the city. Through its legislative representatives at Harrisburg, it chalked up a swell record for the work they did in behalf of the state FEPC bill.

It is on the way to becoming one of the most important sectors of the labor movement in Philadelphia.

Paris Delegates Of WFTU Back Chicago Defender Labor Equality

Chicago Ill.
Workers' Federation

Urges Universal
Union Democracy

10-20-45

By BEN BURNS

(Defender Staff Correspondent)

PARIS—The two million members of the infant World Federation of Trade Unions demanded this week that labor put an end to Jim Crow practices against dark races of the world.

Born out of compromise and conciliation in the name of unity, the Federation has proved to be of gigantic stature as a champion of the earth's colored peoples in its first hesitant steps.

A blistering blast at racial discrimination as the last "remains of barbarism" was one of the initial resolves of this workmen's International which united labor in the far corners of the earth together in the biggest union organization ever formed in history.

In its ranks are 66,855,000 men who toil for a living in 56 different nations. The total Negroes in the new WFTU number at least two million.

For a conference that assembled with a decisive split between left and right wings endangering its future, this parley has accomplished wonders. Topping its feats is the very fact that the new Federation has actually been formed with a unanimously approved constitution and its officers ready to go to work.

For men of color around the globe the new WFTU still adds up more in promises rather than principled practice. But the hard hitting resolution indicting race hate points to the path the WFTU must follow.

Submitted by the Latin American unions, the document declares its purpose to "fight indefatigably in the national and international field, against any discrimination of race, color or social situation, without and within the working class movement."

The resolution took note of Jim Crow practices in South Africa and the U. S. unions by condemning "the pernicious practices which sometimes finds expression in the

workers movement, in which colored and native peoples are forbidden admission into unions; or cannot be included in collective bargaining agreement; or are forbidden to occupy positions of responsibility in skilled work."

Support Puerto Rico 10-20-45

Other moves by the conference included support to the fight of Puerto Rico for national independence and approval of a CIO proposal for the setting up of a WFTU commission "to investigate the economic and political conditions in the colonial countries and to make recommendations to the governments concerned."

A "go-slow" note paced the deliberations. Drastic proposals like that of Ken Hill of Jamaica who asked exclusion from WFTU membership of all unions which "practice or condone race discrimination" were turned down.

Playing the conciliator's role throughout was Sidney Hillman of the CIO, whose sole concern was getting the WFTU formed no matter what the cost or sacrifice.

Paid Price for Unity

He had to bring together two opposing camps, best symbolized in the personalities of Sir Walter Citrine of the British TUC on the right wing and Lombardo Toladano of Latin America on the left. It was Citrine who threw down the gauntlet to the conference the opening day with his defiant speech designed to stall WFTU formation. He cynically stated: "We cannot be bludgeoned into international unity by majority votes."

But Hillman was insistent on unity, paid the price in concessions to the British on vital issues and left Paris this week with a functioning World Trade Union organization.

Heading the WFTU is Citrine, who was unanimously elected president. But Citrine had to swallow in the exchange the bitter pill of acceptance of Louis Saillant of the French CGT, a left-winger, as general secretary.

Africans Protest 10-20-45

Hillman in the process of achieving unity agonized the entire colonial delegation by his strong arm tactics as chairman. In the general council meeting Friday, he clashed for a second time with Negro Africans over his roughshod, callous handling of their case against the color bar.

Earlier black Africans protested his seating of a Jim Crow South African white to represent the whole continent on a key committee. He tried to joke his way out by remarking "I don't know anything about the geography of Africa or the South African color bar."

Hillman at a later general council meeting again commented during a debate "Geography isn't important but unity is."

Wallace Johnson of Sierra Leone

Promptly countered: "If Mr. Hillman doesn't know about geography, it's about time he was taught."

Seats Anti-Negro White 10-20-45

Despite Hillman's professed stand against discrimination, he was instrumental in leading the entire U. S. delegation to vote as a unit for the Jim Crow Laborite from South Africa to represent all of the Dark Continent on the crucial executive board.

The CIO group joined British unionists in voting Brian Goodwin of Northern Rhodesia, a white who strongly opposed the color bar. Goodwin with the backing of Russia, France and Latin America overwhelmingly defeated the South African, M. M. DeVries.

DeVries was earlier in the center of the Negro colonials' fight against Hillman's arrogant tactics in seating him on the constitution committee despite black African protests.

Negro Gets World Trade Union Congress Post

Chicago, Ill.

By HENRY LEE MOON

(Defender Staff Correspondent)

LONDON—Kenneth Hill, representing the Jamaica Trades Union Council, was this week named to the 41-member continuation committee of the World Trade Union Congress which officially closed Saturday after a two-week session.

The committee, headed by James Carey, secretary of the CIO, will draft plans for a new permanent world trade union federation as directed by the WTU Congress. Hill was one of seven delegates from British colonies participating in the conference. Other delegates were: H. H. Critchlow, Guiana; T. A. Bankole, Nigeria; I. A. T. Wallace-Johnson, Sierra-Leone; E. F. Small and I. Lahoumpa, Gambia, and J. S. Annam of the Gold Coast. No representatives from Ethiopia, Liberia or Haiti were sent but China sent three; Cuba, four, and India, five.

Speaking in support of the new federation, Sidney Hillman, CIO leader, said, "Full participation must be accorded to all nations, large and small, including colonial countries, with a fair basis of representation at all conferences and on all executive bodies which will assure each full consideration of its special problems and give each a democratic voice in all decisions."

AFL Boycott Cracks

Expressing similar international views, James Carey stated: "We in the CIO are interested in what takes place in every portion of the world. We are no less interested in rubber plantation workers in Liberia than we are in mine workers in Wales."

The proposal for the new labor federation was at first opposed by the British but they later joined in unanimous approval. The approval drive for the new organization was chiefly sparked by the CIO and Russian and Mexican unions.

The official American Federation of Labor boycott of the World Industrial Organizations and the Labor Congress meeting here was broken with the belated arrival of Courtney D. Ward, secretary of the Painters' District Council of Cleveland and president of the Ohio State Council of Painters and Decorators, representing 30,000 A.F. of L. members.

Represents Many

In defiance of the ban on the world labor meeting imposed by

the A. F. of L. executive council and President William Green, the Painters of Ohio and the Lake County Federation of Labor delegated Ward to represent them at the international meeting. Ward brought with him greetings signed by 170 American Federation of Labor leaders representing such organizations as the Building Service Employees' International Union, with thousands of Negro members; International Association of Marine Stewards; the New York Hotel Trades Council; Local 802, American Federation of Musicians, also with a large Negro membership; Local 306, Motion Picture Operators; Butchers Local 623, Amalgamated Meat Cutters, and Local 802, International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

Among those who signed the greetings was Theodore Jackson, president of Local 370, Dining Car Employees, and Eastern Regional Chairman of the Joint Council of Dining Car Employees.

"The members of my organization felt that the American Federation of Labor made a terrible mistake in refusing to send delegates to the World Labor Congress," Ward told reporters upon arrival here. "They felt that the 7,000,000 members of the A. F. of L. want to be represented at this gathering of world labor... We are sure that the Federation must eventually affiliate to whatever world organization is set up by this Congress."

The message which Ward brought from the 170 A. F. of L. leaders expressed the hope that the London conference would lay the basis for organized labor collaboration in order to prosecute the war to decisive victory, to establish a strong post-war world peace, and to strengthen world democracy. "We are convinced," the message read, "that it is the duty of the entire American labor movement to be represented. We regret that the A. F. of L. decided for non-participation. We hope that this will be changed in the near future."

No Bias in Union

The A. F. of L. officially declined the invitation of the British Trade Union Council to attend the conference because the Congress of Industrial Organizations and the

Russian unions were also invited. The Russian organizations, the A. F. of L. contends, are not "free trade unions in the American sense of the term." The Federation leaders objected to the CIO being represented, claiming for the A. F. of L. the exclusive right to represent American labor.

Ward, who shared a cabin en route to England with the Defen-

World Trade Union Congress

der correspondent, said that his union does not discriminate against Negro painters. According to his estimate there are from 80 to 100 Negro members of the locals included in the district council of which he is secretary-treasurer.

COLONIAL CHARTER

TO OUTLINE PEACE AIMS

Pittsburgh, Pa.

By GEORGE PADMORE
(Courier's London Correspondent)

LONDON — (By Cable) — Colonial delegates to the World Trade Union Conference and representatives of all colored labor organizations in Great Britain have agreed on a provisional committee appointed for the purpose of calling a Pan-African Congress to draw up a charter for colored peoples to present to the peace conference.

During the week-end, labor delegates from Africa, West India and British Guiana traveled to Manchester where they held a preliminary conference with executive members of the International African Service Bureau, Negro Welfare Centre, Negro Association and other colored leaders.

SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS

A series of successful meetings were held at which Colonial delegates reported decisions of the World Trade Union Conference and told of problems affecting native workers in various parts of Africa, the Caribbean and other colored lands.

Reports were made by Wallace Johnson, general secretary of the West Africa Youth League and delegate to the International Trade Union Congress; Ken Hill, third vice president of the People's National Party, Jamaica, and delegate to the trade conference from the Trade Union Council, and Hubert Crichton, president of the British Guiana Trade Union Council.

MANY REPRESENTATIVES

Other speakers included Learie Constantine, welfare officer, British Ministry of Labor.

Kenya, East Africa, was represented at the preliminary conference by Jomo Kenyatta, general secretary of the Kukuyu African Association; James Taylor, former president of the Gold Coast Negro Welfare Centre; Dr. Peter Millard, former president of the Negro Association, Panama Republic; Tomaso Makonnen, executive secretary of the International African Service Bureau, and many other representatives of African nationalist organizations.

Fraternal delegates to welcome African and West Indian labor

delegates were sent to the closing session of the preliminary conference by colored personnel attached to the American Red Cross in Great Britain. American Negro nurses and British colonials serving with the Royal Air Force and British army also had a hand in this. The visitors later were entertained by Red Cross officials, headed by Chester Gray, director of the club at Manchester.

It was agreed that an all-American United Front Committee be set up to join with African, West Indian and other movements to work out plans for the Pan-African Congress scheduled to take place in Paris next September.

World Trade Union Issued Challenge to End Labor Bias

NEW YORK—Speaking at the London World Trade Union Conference last month, Joseph Curran, president of the National Maritime Union, urged the setting up of world labor machinery to wipe out exploitation and discrimination all over the globe.

Representing the American labor delegation, Curran, also vice-president of the CIO, insisted that a leading position among organized labor's post-war demands be given positive solutions of the racial and economic problems.

To ensure their elimination, he advised the creation of a special department under the new World Trade Federation whose sole duty would be to wipe out discrimination wherever it is operating to the detriment of the working classes.

NMU's Lack of Bias Cited
Because his own union—the National Maritime Union—has outlawed discrimination, he said, seamen of all races and creeds working side by side have been able to deliver vital war materials to all battlefronts.

Declaring that economic discrimination against one minority is a forerunner of similar action against all, he added that reconstruction of the international trade union movement can be accomplished only by strong, positive action.

To destroy fascism which can endure after the war is won, he concluded, unionists must achieve working class unity within and among the nations.

NEGROES MAKE HISTORY AT WORLD TRADE UNION CONGRESS; FIGHT AGAINST IMPERIALISM

By Rudolph Dunbar

London. (ANP)—The World Union congress has just ended in London. It has been debating the most controversial issue, the question of how to shape the future international organization of the trade union movement. The old International Federation of Trade unions, a corpse which polluted the air—is about to be cremated. In its place a brand new world organization will unfold. It has provided a platform for those who are anxious to place International working class cooperation before alliances with capitalists governments.

This historic conference was made possible by the courtesy of Winston Churchill and his Tory colleagues. If they had not granted visas and found accommodations on over-crowded ships and planes to enable the delegates to get to London, the gathering would have been impossible.

For the first time in history Negro delegates from colonial trade unions took their places at an international labor gathering. They came with a mandate from the workers in the colonies and have echoed their sentiments at the congress with unmistakable faithfulness. The Negro delegates were: H. N. Critchlow, British Guiana Trades Union council; Kenneth Hill, Jamaica Trades Union council; T. A. Bankole, Nigerian Trades Union council; I. A. T. Wallace Johnson, Sierra Leone Trades Union congress; E. F. Small, Gambia Labor Unions council; J. S. Annam, Gold Coast Railway Civil Servants and Technical Workers union; I. M. Garba Johumpa, Gambia Labor union council.

The most outstanding member of the colonial delegates is Wallace Johnson from Sierra Leone. He was persecuted by the colonial governments of Nigeria, the Gold Coast, and Sierra Leone as sniggering impropriety. He was editor of the Nigerian Daily Telegraph in 1931. The following year found him in the Soviet Union where he went to attend the world conference. When he returned to Nigeria in 1933 he became the victim of a series of persecution and raids by the police and subsequently had to leave Nigeria for the Gold Coast. There from 1934 to

1936 he was associated with the Gold Coast Spectator and African Morning Post. He also founded the West African Youth league and became its organizing secretary.

Mr. Johnson traveled extensively throughout the colony doing propaganda work for the youth league. In 1936 he was charged under the new seditious ordinance for publishing an article against the Gold Coast government. The article was entitled, "Has the African a God?" He was convicted, sentenced and fined \$250. Mr. Johnson appealed to the West African Court of Appeals and lost. He finally appealed to the privy council in London and was defended by Sir Stafford Crips and later by D. N. Pritt, K.C. This appeal was lost again.

The privy council claimed that although the article did not contain any seditious utterances or was written with any seditious intention, the council was, however, unable to revise the decision of the West African court on grounds that the ordinance under which he was charged was local legislation of the Gold Coast. This more or less called upon the defense to prove innocent instead of upon the prosecution to prove guilt. The privy council therefore argued that it was not in their power to alter the decision of the court. The privy council, however, found a way to intervent in the famous Knowles case, in favor of Knowles, who was convicted under the same ordinance as Wallace Johnson.

Johnson came to London in 1937 and interested himself with the African Service Bureau. He was a brilliant and urgent lecturer at the open forum in Hyde Park in defense of the rights of the colonial peoples. When he returned to Africa in 1939 he was arrested for criminal libel against a European official simply because he inquired who was the person responsible for the act of trying a native and flogging him, with a view of extracting payment of tax. The native died as a result of the flogging.

At the outbreak of war he was sent to an internment camp. In March, 1943, he was deported to the Island of Bonthe on the Sherbro district, a mosquito infested area. He was given several grains of quinine daily when the mosqui-

tes attacked him too fiercely. Wallace Johnson was finally released in October, 1944, and returned to Free Town where he continued his work in defense of the Africans. Despite these series of persecutions to break Johnson, the colonial government found itself in the "awful" position of providing a plane for Wallace Johnson to fly to London to take part in the World Trade congress.

World Trade Union Parley and Negro Labor

ONE of the most promising signs of the times is the editorial comment of the London Times of Feb. 19 on the World Trade Union Conference. The Times says the World Trade Union Conference "has ended with a notable success," and adds that "the chance of uniting 'the trade union bodies of freedom-loving nations irrespective of racial, creed, political, religious or philosophical differences' has never before been greater."

This announcement by Britain's most powerful newspaper which exerts wide influence on British policy throughout the Empire holds special significance in regard to the establishment of democratic and unmolested trade unions in colonial countries and particular in the British colonies of Africa and the West Indies. It is indeed a hopeful sign when the London Times favors a world trade union movement based upon freedom-loving peoples irrespective of race or creed.

On July 1, 1931, the International Conference of Negro Workers was scheduled to be held in London. The British government prohibited the holding of the conference in London, and leading English dailies fully supported the policy of the government. The conference was subsequently held at Hamburg, Germany. In attendance were delegates of trades organizations of labor from South Africa, from Accra, Gambia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone in West Africa; from Jamaica and Haiti in the West Indies, as well as representatives of Negro labor from the United States.

What the British government and the English press seemed to fear at that time was the perspective of the organization of free trade unions of Negro laborers. This policy was however, only the policy and attitude of the International Federation of Trade Unions (Amsterdam) towards colored and colonial labor. The IFTU was essentially a European and American labor organization. For the leaders of Amsterdam the world did not include colored and colonial labor in the brotherhood of labor. At times it made pretenses of friendship for colonial labor by having government - dominated representatives



from certain colonial areas. The records show that on numerous occasions many of these fraternal delegates, finding out the true character of the IFTU, protested and left these international gatherings in disgust. So far as Negro labor was concerned the IFTU was completely degenerate. The apathy growing out of this attitude led to the calling of the First International Trade Union Conference of Negro Workers in 1931.

PRESENT at the conference were regularly elected delegates from the Gold Coast Carpenters Association and the Gold Coast Drivers Association of Accra; the Colored Labor's Organization of South Africa; the Gambia Labor Union; the Nigerian Democratic Workers' Association; the Railroad Workers' Union of Sierra Leone, and the Railway Workers' Union of Jamaica, West Indies. The conference, after listening to the reports from the various countries, adopted a program of simple trade union organization, including the right to organize, shorter hours, a living wage, social benefits, against forced labor and repressions and a petition for democratic rights in general in their respective countries. "We are here for no political controversies," declared the basic report of the conference. The years following proved particularly fruitful in the stimulation of trade unionism among Negro workers.

The war against fascism has also resulted in the liberalization of trade union policy towards many Negro colonies. In the British colony of Jamaica, a strong labor movement has grown up. Concessions have been won from the British government for a legislative council and in recent elections the Jamaica Labor Party came out with more than two-thirds majority in the House.

Today we see a new world body of labor formed which does not despise colored and colonial labor peoples; but which on the contrary, encompasses delegates from Nigeria, Jamaica, India, China and Latin America as equal brothers of the world labor movement. Obviously this is a firm democratic foundation. It is in line with the policies laid down at Teheran, Cairo and Crimea.

by James W. Ford

**Maids in Hotels
And Apartments
Get Pay Boost**

WASHINGTON, D. C., (NN PA) — The District Minimum Wage and Industrial Safety Board last Wednesday fixed a new minimum wage schedule for women and minors employed in local hotels, restaurants and apartment houses, which amounts to about a 35 per cent increase in their present pay.

Under the new schedule, the minimum pay effective January 1, for a 6-day 48 hour week will be increased for waitresses from \$13.25 to \$17.90, counter girls from \$16.50 to \$22.30, and maids and cleaners from \$14.50 to \$19.60. *11-10-45*

Part-time employees of the "public housekeeping" industry will receive an increase from 40 cents minimum pay an hour to 50 cents.

Negro Wage Levels

"Poverty wages" for Negroes adversely affect our entire economic structure, an unidentified "legislative leader" told an Associated Press reporter in Montgomery the other day. This statement surely is beyond dispute, whatever the complex and controversial phases of racial relations. **3-26-45**

Negroes make up approximately 35 per cent of the population of this state. The earnings of many of them have been on a very low level, although wartime conditions have brought an extensive improvement, at least temporarily. If wages among Negroes, especially among the unskilled classes, are to revert generally to those that prevailed before the war, many problems will be raised or intensified. This, of course, is true, quite aside from any social and political issues.

Obviously our markets are greatly reduced when the purchasing power of a large part of our population is low. Inadequate individual incomes limit health, education and progress generally. Tax receipts of the local and state governments are correspondingly held down, with school, public health and other standards inevitably lowered. Surely the economic aspects of "poverty wages" are largely beyond dispute.

Birmingham, Ala.
The legislator who discussed the matter with The AP reporter declined to permit the use of his name. That is a commentary on prevalent handicaps in the discussion of the problem. Evidently the legislator feared that his remarks might be misconstrued. Yet he sees it as a prime economic responsibility of the people of the state. We should be able at least to discuss it without aggravating more controversial matters.

* * *

Surely white Alabamians are not desirous of keeping Negroes in continuing poverty merely because of fear of social and political consequences of economic progress. **3-26-45**

Of course, raising wage levels is not merely a matter of agreeing that higher incomes are desirable. There is a point at which ascending wages tend to cut down on the number of jobs at those wages. Many potential employers will be found not only unwilling, but unable, to pay more than a certain rate for certain work.

How great just now, for example, is the demand for Springtime yard workers. Yet there are limits to what can be afforded for such work.

Then there is the important matter of increasing qualifications for higher earnings.

But, of course, there is another side to the matter. The general raising of wage levels from the poverty line helps to extend the ability and willingness to pay more for certain kinds of work. It extends opportunity. The present wartime economic situation is evidencing that in many ways. **3-26-45**

The objective at least should be clear. It is a decent living standard for all our people. Whatever wages—in return for good work—may be necessary to support such a standard should be our goal.

Maids Picket Hotel For A Living Wage

Six Negro maids at the Park Manor Hotel, 5560 Pershing ave., entered the third week of a strike for an increase in wages and union recognition Monday.

The maids who each are reported assigned ten apartments, fifteen single rooms, fifteen bath rooms and two long halls to care for received \$55 a month. They entered the CIO Hotel Employees union and started a fight for a living wage.

The manager was reported to have told the union leader, he couldn't understand why the union was interested in a bunch of "coons," and declared he would fight the union to a finish. He asked the guests to take care of their own apartment, which they did. **3-23-45**

Last Monday an increase in wages to \$65 a month was agreed upon. This was after difficulty was experienced in securing replacements from the Urban League and USES. The strikers continued to picket when the apartment representative refused to sign a contract with the union.

Rules Janitor Must

Be Paid Wages Of Interstate Commerce

SAVANNAH, Ga. — (SNS) — Federal Judge Archibald B. Lovett had ruled Friday that a janitor for a Georgia bank is engaged in interstate commerce.

As a result, the Bank of Waynesboro must pay Henry Lewis, a Negro, accordingly under the federal wage and hour law, the judge held.

The decision said that in addition to janitorial duties, Lewis acted as bank porter or "runner," taking mail to the post office and handling similar assignments. Judge Lovett said: "Lewis acts as the link between the bank and the instrumentalities of commerce used by the bank in carrying on its business."

Lewis, described in the decision as "a typical small town colored handy man," testified that he per-

sonally was satisfied with the terms of his employment. The U. S. Department of Labor instituted the suit.

Testimony showed Lewis makes \$7 for a 17 1/2-hour week, with 40 cents an hour additional for work in excess of that period. The court ruled he must be paid 40 cents an hour for time when he was "standing by on call waiting for work." The bank had paid him only for time actually spent in performance of his duties.

Cotton Pickers' Pay Slashed As Anderson Backs Plan

By ELIZABETH DONAHUE
Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON, Sept. 22—Fifty thousand cotton pickers, who aren't in a position to strike or picket or make very loud demands on their Government, this week took a wage cut that may total \$15,000,000 when Secretary of Agriculture Clinton P. Anderson sided with the cotton planters and ruled that a man can get only \$2.10 for picking 100 pounds of white fluff.

Southerners in Congress saw to it, long ago, that cotton pickers were separated from the general wage and price stabilization laws. The Southern legislators provided for special local "wage boards" in Mississippi and elsewhere. The boards were dominated by the planters and given dictatorial powers to set wage ceilings in the cotton fields.

When the pinch was on during the war, the cotton pickers got around \$3.90 per 100 pounds.

But now that the war is over, and, although the Government has relaxed wage ceilings in other areas, cotton planters have been allowed to conduct an "election."

They voted to cut the pickers back arbitrarily to \$2.00. Secretary Anderson asked them to raise it to \$2.50. The planters said no. But Lewis said they would tack on 10 cents. Anderson agreed.

It appears that the Anderson ruling is final because the Office of Economic Stabilization, headed by William Davis until he resigned this week, is not getting too much attention from other Government agencies since President Truman virtually abolished it.

Davis, on the request of President H. L. Mitchell of the Southern

Tenants Farmers Union, promised to review the case and requested full information from Anderson a week ago. **9-23-45**

So far Anderson hasn't replied. Mitchell, spokesman for the cotton pickers, wired Davis that the wage ceiling of \$2.10 a hundred pounds in 19 Mississippi counties would result in a \$15,000,000 wage cut because the ceiling will probably be extended to three States.

At the new rate the average cotton picker will get \$15.75 a week. This low wage, Mitchell told Davis, "may result in the loss of crops, as workers will not meekly accept cuts in their earnings."

Nevertheless, the realities of a strike in the cotton fields, where impoverished workers have little other opportunity for employment does not apparently intimidate the powerful planters—nor the Secretary of Agriculture.

Officials of the Dept. of Agriculture, when asked why the pickers should get less this year than last year, when wage controls have been generally relaxed and prices increased, replied:

"The planters complain that under the higher rate of pay tenant farmers could make more by picking cotton and there wouldn't be anybody to grow it."

The background of the lonesome battle to get a decent living wage for the cotton growers is not a pretty one. **9-23-45**

The "wage boards" in Mississippi, Arkansas and Missouri conducted the elections. Mitchell has disclosed that only the planters and the tenant farmers were eligible to vote on this referendum, which set a wage ceiling of \$2 for a hundred pounds of cotton.

The election results, as PM has previously disclosed, showed that 22,193 voters were for the \$2 ceiling. Only 313 opposed it.

This was one Southern election in which the Negroes could afford to vote. But they were tenants and sharecroppers who exercised their franchise under orders from their white plantation bosses. Many of them, according to Mitchell, had no idea what they were voting for.

Mitchell has finally been heard in the highest Washington councils. But it looks as if the battle is lost, unless he gets the full backing of the top officials of the CIO and AFL. Both organizations are firmly committed to fighting ceilings on wages.

Southern Planters Use U. S. Law to Slash Wages

News Review

Little-Known Clause

Gives Them Power Via

'Wage Boards'

9-11-45

By WILBUR H. BALDINGER
Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11.—Some 500,000 Southern plantation and farm workers were faced today with virtual peonage under official auspices of the U. S. Government.

It's a long and complicated story, but first of all it's a shocking one, and it will take a full stop and a round-about-face by Secretary of Agriculture Clinton Anderson to give it anything near a happy ending.

The primary fact is that so-called "wage boards," operating under little-known provisions of the Wage Stabilization Act of 1942, gave plantation owners and their agents almost dictatorial power to set wage ceilings in the cotton fields.

This power wasn't used during the critical war years, when cotton producers were bidding desperately for manpower to get the crop in. Wages went up. Now, with the war over, and thousands of Southern war workers pouring back home from Detroit and other arsenal centers, the situation is different.

9-11-45
Drive Pay Down

And the plantation owners have wasted no time in seizing an opportunity to drive the pay down—all with the full authority of a stabilization agency of the U. S. A.

H. L. Mitchell, president of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, (Secretary Anderson, an unaffiliated, told the story to a half-dozen reporters who gathered in a hot corner of the National Press Club to hear it.)

A commonly-held idea here has been that the WLB (War Labor Board) and closely-related agencies, such as the U. S. Treasury Dept., had full and steady control of U. S. wage structures, covering everybody.

There was one big exception, though. The Dept. of Agriculture, under the Wage Stabilization Act, had jurisdiction over farm wages, which almost never got over a \$2500 annual figure. (The Southern Tenant Farmers Union has a hopeful objective of \$625 per year perpers and tenants who took as law family for farm workers.)

Delayed Action

Anyway, nothing much was done about farm wages until July, when the end of the war—and a big reconversion labor pool—came into sight. Then the "wage boards" of the Agriculture Dept. decided that now was the time to get together and to act.

The result was that in Mississippi, Arkansas and Missouri—in the Cotton Belt—the "wage boards" conducted "elections" which decided that the wage for picking 100 pounds of cotton should have a ceiling—\$2, which would amount on the average to \$15 a week. During the war, a cotton picker could pick up as much as \$3.90 a day for that kind of work, which fewer and fewer people wanted.

"Only producers were eligible to vote in the referendum," Mitchell said. "Cotton pickers whose wages were to be set were not permitted to participate in the voting."

So, in Mississippi, Arkansas and Missouri, the plantation owners and their dependents—the tenant farmers and the sharecroppers—went to the Dept. of Agriculture polls and voted. The results were overwhelmingly for the \$2 per 100 pound pay ceiling. In Mississippi, for instance, the count was 22,193 for the ceiling to 313 against.

"We maintain that such unanimity of opinion on a controversial issue may only be compared with totalitarian plebiscites in Europe," Mitchell told officials of the Agriculture Dept. in a conference in which he was joined by representatives of the CIO, AFL, Union for Democratic Action and the Farmers Union.

Secretary Anderson, a good man, was not there.) "On several occasions, Adolf Hitler gave the German people an opportunity to cast a 'ja.'"

'Just a Farmer'

The results of these polls, produced at a time when the WLB was relaxing wage controls for industrial workers instead of tightening them, will be up to Anderson for action. Mitchell and the 27,000 families in his union hoped that the Secretary would reject the re-had jurisdiction over farm wages, turns of the "wage boards."

tion overseers, and that many of them didn't understand what they were voting for.

He also quoted from the transcript of remarks made by Oscar Johnston, president of the National Cotton Council, at wage hearings in Osceola, Ark., on Aug. 29:

"I am just a farmer. . . . In the picking season (now under full sway) the city workers come out and prey upon the sharecroppers on my farm by demanding too high wages. . . .

"I have never liked Government interference but I am beginning to learn that we will have to pay the price of being a member of organized society. If the price of cotton is regulated, then the price of labor must be regulated."

Union Busting

"In proposing wage ceilings, we cannot lose. The Secretary will not set a price above our proposals. We must be able to enforce our ceilings.

"Fortunately, the law provides that a man must pay a fine of \$1000 a day for every day he over-pays a man. If he over-pays 10 men, he must pay \$10,000. . . .

"The ceiling will protect us against labor organization. . . . Some of my foremen wanted to break it (the Southern Tenant Farmers Union) up by violence but I said 'No,' for I knew that no organization can be powerful unless we grant the closed shop and check-off system. And that we will never do.

"A labor organization fights for higher wages but workers will not join unions when they know their employers will go to jail if he pays them more than the ceiling.

"We must have a ceiling price if we are going to break up the union."

Well, Johnston got his vote for a pay ceiling. The next move today was up to Clinton Anderson.

Cotton Pickers Forced To Vote By Big Planters

9-18-45

Union Head Calls Upon Agriculture Sec'y To Mediate

By HARRY McALPIN

WASHINGTON, D. C. — (NNPA) — Cotton plantation owners in the South, looking forward to a surplus of farm labor returning with the closing down of war industries and the discharge of soldiers from the armed services, are seeking to force the Secretary of Agriculture to set a wage ceiling of \$2 per 100 lbs. for cotton picking, through an undemocratic referendum conducted in Mississippi, Arkansas and Missouri, according to H. L. Mitchell, president of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union.

Mr. Mitchell was in Washington last week to protest to the Department of Agriculture the virtual peonage such a wage ceiling would produce for some 500,000 farm workers, most of whom are Negroes.

CHARGES RESTRICTED VOTE

According to Mitchell, only producers were eligible to vote in the referendum. Cotton pickers whose wages were to be set were not permitted to participate in the voting. The referendum and hearings in each state were conducted by wage boards appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture under the little known provision of the Wage Stabilization Act of 1942. No effort was made by the big producers to use the provisions of the Act during the war when farm labor was scarce; and wages rose to as high as \$3.90 a day. This attempt is being made at a time when wages in industry are being released from restrictions of the War Labor Board.

The move is aimed also at breaking up any labor organization among the farm workers and tenant-farmers. Oscar Johnston, owner of the South's largest plantation in the Mississippi delta, declared at one of the hearings held by wage boards whose members are closely allied with the big plantation interests: "The ceiling will protect us against labor organization. Some of my foremen wanted to break it (the Southern Tenant

Farmers Union) up by violence, but I said 'no,'; I knew that no organization can be powerful unless we grant the closed shop and check-off system. And that we will never do. 9-18-45

"A labor organization fights for higher wages, but workers will not join unions when they know their employers will go to jail if he pays them more than the ceiling. We must have a ceiling if we are going to break up the union."

By intimidation and withholding information as to what they were voting for, the sharecroppers, who were counted as producers though they do their own picking, voted 22,193 to 313 for the ceiling in Mississippi. According to Mr. Mitchell, "such unanimity of opinion on a controversial issue may only be compared with totalitarian plebiscites in Europe."

CHARGES COERCION

Citing incidents of undue and undemocratic influence on the voting sharecroppers in the referendum, Mr. Mitchell said on several plantations in the Mississippi delta, Negro sharecroppers were summoned by the plantation owner on the date of the referendum and told to vote for ceilings on cotton picking. In most cases, the workers had no previous knowledge of the referendum and were not informed as to the issues involved. On one of the plantations, a few handbills appeared the night before the voting, after notice had been given and date and time set, in which the issues were explained. The next day, the sharecroppers, afraid to vote against what their plantation boss wanted, want fishing and did not vote at all.

In Lincoln County, Ark., a group of small farmers who were organized and acquainted with the issues waited throughout the day and no one appeared from the wage board to conduct the referendum. Their votes would have been cast against the ceilings.

Secretary of Agriculture Clinton P. Anderson was asked by the Southern Tenant Farmers union last Monday to reject recommendations for a wage ceiling on cotton pickers made to him by wage boards of Arkansas, Mississippi and Missouri.

"It is ridiculous to set wage ceilings for people who earn less than \$400 a year, or during the cotton-picking period, only \$15 a week," H. L. Mitchell, president of the STFU, told reporters.

The ceilings being proposed are \$2 a day with hours from "can't" meaning from as early in the morning when you can see until as late in the evening as when you can't.

Mitchell charged that hearings which preceded a referendum vote

on the question of establishing or dominated by the big planters. had no previous knowledge of the referendum act of 1940, but only re- wagers to express their views fully. Mitchell stated, as to the issues involved." to use the method of controlling un- who tried were intimidated or in- moned by the plantation owner on as are the only areas in the southern activity and demands for high- he added, were generally controlled by the Wage Sta-

Slave Wages Face Farm Workers After 'Legal' Cut

9-22-45

WASHINGTON

Excepted from control by the War Labor Board and related Federal agencies, Southern plantation owners have set ceilings for farm labor which will hold nearly 500,000 plantation and farm workers under virtual peonage, it was said recently.

Their action was revealed by H. L. Mitchell, president of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, who pointed out that under the Wage Stabilization Act of 1942 the Department of Agriculture was given jurisdiction over farm wages.

As a result, he added, only the intervention of Secretary of Agriculture Clinton Anderson can offset the almost despotic authority wielded by the owners and their agents.

Vote for "Slave" Wages

Forced to pay high wages during the war years, owners in Mississippi, Arkansas and Missouri, Cotton Belt States, were given the chance to participate in an "election" conducted by the "wage boards" of the Department of Agriculture in July.

The referendum which set the wage for cotton picking at \$2 for 100 pounds or about \$15 weekly, according to Mitchell, was limited to producers, tenant farmers and sharecroppers, who voted overwhelmingly for the ceiling.

Comparing the referendum with the plebiscites in Europe, Mitchell said that the tenant farmers and sharecroppers, especially the colored, did not understand what they were voting for.

Will Break Up Union

At the same time, he pointed out that Oscar Johnson, president of the National Cotton Council, speaking at wage hearing in Osceola, Ark., on Aug. 29, said that the ceiling will protect against labor organization.

Johnson, he added, explained that denial of a close shop and a check-off system to the Tenant Farmers' Union, which has 27,000 member families, will serve better than violence to break it up.

The Cotton Pickers' Ceiling

Memphis World, 10-2-45

The U. S. Department of Agriculture in establishing last week a wage ceiling of \$2.05 per one-hundred pounds for cotton pickers in 21 counties in Arkansas, obviously yielded to the insistent demands of the powerful southern planters, rather than being persuaded by the prevailing wage standards of other workers of similar training and skill in the same communities. And while this regulatory ceiling affects only cotton pickers in Arkansas, it will only be a matter of time when all pickers,—slightly over one half million of them,—mostly Negroes, will be forced to accept this figure. Indeed at this very moment, in the great Mississippi Delta, as well as in Missouri, the rich planters have about succeeded in winning Secretary of Agriculture Anderson to their demands for a similar loft on cotton pickers.

The decision of the Agricultural Department to effect such a ceiling at this time is certainly open to serious question. Everywhere now citizens are beginning to hear and see signs of relenting so far as ceiling restrictions go. Ever these very planters oppose the operation of ceilings when it happens to militate against them. On the other hand, the plain fact that we have gone through four bloody years of war without the necessity for ceilings on cotton pickers should be proof enough that there is little, if any need at all, for a ceiling. Already, the cotton pickers are working for less than any group. They are indeed sub-standard workers.

Cotton Pickers Lose Fight On Price Ceilings

The Atlanta Daily World, Atlanta, Georgia, 9-29-45

9-29-45

WASHINGTON — (NNPA) —

The Department of Agriculture announced Friday that it had established a wage-ceiling of two dollars and five cents per one-hundred pounds for in 21 Arkansas counties. The announcement from the Agriculture Department were made to enforce the provisions of this 1942 act during the chorus of protests from cotton-war because of labor shortage, as

a consequence, wages rose to as high as \$3.90 a day. But with the close of the war these planters are looking forward to a surplus of farm workers returning to the farms as a result of factory and industry shut-downs. Such a ceiling will produce virtual peonage for some 500,000 farm workers, most of whom are Negroes.

House Asked to End Negro Discrimination in Wage Bill

P.M. New York, N.Y. 11-2-45

Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON, Nov. 2.—Leslie S. Perry, Washington representative of the National Assn. for the Advancement of Colored People, has asked the House Labor Committee to protect Negroes against wage discriminations in the 65-cent minimum wage bill now being considered by the Committee.

Perry presented figures showing as much as 50 per cent differential in hourly wages for white and Negro workers of the same skill doing the same work.

While Negroes receive the same protection as white workers at the minimum wage level, no protection is afforded at present or in the proposed new bill above the minimum.

The pending bill sets up industry committees which are authorized to define job classifications for semi-skilled and skilled workers. The bill prohibits these committees from making classifications "on the basis of age or sex." Perry asked that the words "race or national origin" be added.

He pointed to War Labor Board cases which indicate the need for such amendment. In one the Southport Petroleum Co. of Delaware was ordered by the Board to discontinue its practice of classifying its laborers as "colored laborers" and "white laborers." The Board granted wage increases to the Negro workers to bring them up to the wages already being paid white laborers for the same work.

In another case the WLB found that the Miami Copper Co. of Arizona had classified its employees as "Anglo-American males" and "other employees." The "other employees" included Negroes, Mexicans, and women. The Board ordered the company to make wage adjustments to end discrimination against the "other employees."